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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE  
22 October 1954

*Ed. JH*

State Dept. review completed

TO: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: Nigerian Elections of mid-November 1954

1. Offices to be filled: Regional elections to 184 seats of the federal House of Representatives. The Northern Region is allotted 92, the Southern an equal number. Of the 92 elected from the South, 42 will come from the Eastern Region, 42 from the Western Region, 2 from the city of Lagos, and 6 from the Southern Cameroons.
2. Parties participating: National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) Eastern Region, Action Group (AG) Western Region, Northern People's Congress (NPC) Northern Region, Kamerun National Congress (KNC) Southern Cameroons. Minority parties: Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), Nigerian Independence Party (NIP), Nigerian People's Congress, Kamerun People's Party, and Middle Belt People's Party.
3. Outstanding personalities: Nnamdi Azikiwe (NCNC), Obafemi Awolowo (AG), Mallam Ahmadu (Sarduna of Sokoto) (NPC), and E. M. L. Endeley (KNC).
4. Present party strengths: Under the old 1951 constitution, Nigeria was divided into three regions. Of the 136 seats, 68 were allocated to the Northern Region, and 34 each to the Western and Eastern Regions. A breakdown of party strength in this federal house is not available, but, as the regional houses which elected representatives to the federal house were dominated by one party, party strength was probably broken down roughly as follows:

NPC	68 seats
NCNC and allies	36 seats
AG and allies	32 seats

Party breakdown by region:

Eastern House of Assembly: (January 1954)

NCNC	72 seats
NIP	9 seats
United National Party	3 seats
KNC	13*

\*The 13 Cameroons' representatives to the Eastern House refused to take their seats, and now, under the new constitution, have obtained a separate quasi-federal status with their own assembly.

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Western House of Assembly (elected July-December 1951)

AG	52 seats
NCNC	18 seats
Independents	10 seats

Northern House of Assembly (elected July-December 1951)

Controlled by NPC; no breakdown available.

5. Principal issues: Nigerian politics are characterized by intense tribal and regional loyalties. Electoral victories are determined by these ties and the popularity of the leaders rather than by any basic political convictions. North-South differences revolve around Southern demands for self-government by 1956, which the Moslem North, afraid of domination by the more advanced Christian-pagan South, opposes as being premature. The South in turn is split: The East and West are divided by long-standing tribal antagonism between the western Yoruba and the eastern Ibo; and the Southern Cameroons has friction with the Eastern Region because of its fear of Eastern domination and its dislike of Azikiwe's NCNC.

The parties have little significant support outside their own region. Each politician is primarily interested in retaining his position in his party, maintaining regional strength, and trying to build up national influence by interregional party alliances. These alliances, however, have so far been short-lived. Beyond regional differences as to the timing of self-government and the relative strength of the regions as against the central government, local issues, with each politician trying to outbid his opponent, play the most significant role.

6. Principal factors influencing the outcome: Local issues such as wages, taxes, intertwined with tribal and regional affiliations and the personal popularity of the leaders and their parties.
7. Background: Elections to a new federal house are being held now to implement constitutional revisions agreed to by the British and Nigerian leaders in August 1953 and January 1954. The revisions, which came into force on 1 October, enlarge the federal assembly over the previous house and provide for direct elections rather than indirect elections by the regional assemblies as heretofore.

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8. Informed opinion on outcome: American observers in the area expect that unless some near miracle occurs, it is improbable (regional and tribal loyalties being what they are) that any of the present political parties can win enough seats outside its own region to enable it to gain an over-all majority in the federal House of Representatives. The party breakdown is speculated to be roughly:

NPC	80 seats
NCNC and allies	60 seats
AG and allies	44 seats

9. Significance for US security interests: There is no direct significance. Although Nigeria is approaching self-government, it is still a British colony and protectorate whose foreign affairs are conducted by Britain. No world issues are involved; no parties are fighting the campaign on a pro- or anti-US platform.

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